

REMARKS

Applicants hereby request a one-month extension. **A check in the amount of \$110.00 for the one-month extension fee is enclosed.** Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with the present application may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

This Request For Reconsideration is submitted in response to the July 2, 2003 Office Action. The claims presently pending in this application are independent method claim 1 (with claims 2-18 depending), independent system claim 19 (with claims 20-34 depending) and independent system claim 35 (with claims 36-40 depending).

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-9, 12, 14-16, 18-27, 29, and 31-32 as allegedly anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) by Silverman et al. (US 2002/0110228). Applicants respectfully traverse that rejection.

Applicants' invention is directed to a method (claim 1) and systems (claims 19 and 35) for networking and controlling appliances within a local environment containing a local controller and a local server, with each appliance being controllable by a corresponding appliance control module. According to claim 1, the inventive method includes the steps of (a) obtaining an appliance control module for each appliance, (b) installing on the local server, the obtained appliance control modules, (c) providing communication between the local server and the appliances, and (d) accessing the local server with the local controller to select one of the installed appliance control modules for controlling the corresponding appliance. Thus, once a module is obtained and installed, it is used to control an appliance associated with that module.

According to claim 19, the present invention is also directed to a network for controlling appliances within a local environment containing a local controller and a local server, with each appliance being controllable by a corresponding appliance control module. The network includes (a) means for obtaining an appliance control module for each appliance, (b) means for installing on the local server, the obtained appliance control modules, (c) means for providing communication between the local server and the appliances, and (d) means for accessing the local server with the local controller to select one of the installed appliance control modules for controlling the corresponding appliance.

According to claim 35, the present invention is also directed to a network for controlling an appliance contained within a local environment, the appliance being controllable by a corresponding appliance control module and having a memory-stored address for providing a location of the corresponding appliance control module. The network according to claim 35 includes (a) a local controller having a wireless transceiver for communicating with the appliance and for receiving the memory-stored address from the appliance, the memory-stored address being used to locate the appliance control module, and (b) a local server in communication with the local controller for receiving and storing the located appliance control module.

Turning now to the Silverman et al. reference, this reference discloses a remote control device for communicating with and controlling a network computer connected to a network. The remote control device incorporates a combination of a cordless telephone and an infrared remote control for electronic devices (see par. [0002]).

As per claims 1 and 19, the Examiner states that Silverman et al. discloses in paragraphs [0021-0023] a method and network which anticipate the method and network as

recited in claims 1 and 19. Firstly, Silverman et al. does not describe expressly or inherently electronic devices being controllable by a corresponding appliance control module. Secondly, Silverman et al. makes no mention of obtaining an appliance control module for each appliance and installing the obtained module(s) on the local server. Thirdly, there is no teaching in Silverman et al. to access the local server with the local controller to select one of the installed appliance control modules for controlling the corresponding appliance. Upon reviewing Silverman et al, it is clear that this reference discloses a combination cordless telephone, PDA and infrared remote control for use in controlling electronic devices, and also teaches a technique of providing multiple data paths from the cordless telephone/remote control to an equipped network computer (par. [0021]). Silverman et al. does not describe, either expressly or inherently, any communication between the computer and the electronic devices, and does not disclose any means that could enable such communication. Thus, the statement made in paragraph [0021] of Silverman et al. that “the user may simultaneously control televisions, video tape systems, set-top boxes, and other home appliances while carrying on telephone conversations, reviewing data retrieved from the network, and controlling the browser” can only be interpreted to mean that communication is provided between the cordless telephone/remote control and the appliances, on the one hand, and between the cordless telephone/remote control and the network computer, on the other hand. Silverman et al. does not disclose anything comparable to the element of the present invention of claims 1 and 19 wherein communication between the local server and the appliances is provided.

Moreover, Silverman et al. has no teaching of a local server in communication with a local controller for receiving and storing a located appliance control module, as is recited in claim 35.

Thus, the method and the networks disclosed in independent claims 1, 19 and 35 are novel over Silverman et al. Moreover, there is no teaching in Silverman et al. to render the independent claims 1, 19 and 35 obvious. Accordingly, and for these reasons alone, claims 1, 19 and 35 are patentable.

Inasmuch as the independent claims are believed to be patentable over Silverman et al. for the reasons set forth above, the dependent claims are also believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons.

The remaining claim rejections in the Office Action pertain to dependent claims which are believed to be patentable due to their dependence on the independent claims. Nevertheless, to further point out the patentability of their invention, applicants set forth the following remarks concerning the secondary references relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the dependent claims.

US 6,393,297 B1 (Song) relates to a method of remotely controlling an appliance which is installed at a remote place that is not reachable by a conventional controller. More particularly, Song uses a short message service (SMS) provided in a mobile terminal to control the appliance in such a remote area (see col.1, lines 19-24). According to Song, the method requires the steps of periodically converting the status data of the external appliance into a short message in a predetermined form, transmitting the converted short message to the mobile terminal, setting the mobile phone in a short message transmission mode to transmit the converted short message to a designated message center, converting the received short message by the message center into the corresponding state data which is transmitted to an external appliance monitoring center, analyzing the state data of the short message by the monitoring center to produce a control command which is transmitted to the message center, converting the

received control command by the message center into the corresponding short message which is transmitted to the mobile phone, transmitting the converted short message of the control command by the mobile terminal to the external appliance, and controlling the external appliance in accordance with the received short message of the control command (see Abstract).

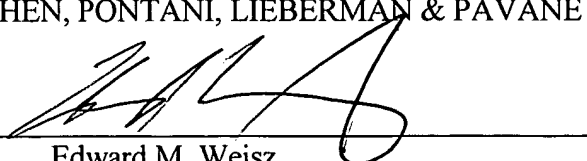
Song does not disclose controlling appliances within a local environment containing a local controller and a local server, each appliance being controllable by a corresponding appliance control module as defined in the pending claims of the invention. Even if it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Silverman and Song, such a combination would not result in the invention as claimed in the subject application.

US 2002/0012329 A1 (Atkinson et al.) relates to on the fly execution of software instructions and/or operations on information transferred between wireless and/or wired devices (see Abstract). More particularly, Atkinson et al. teaches specific details relating to Java™ or Java-like technology based communications between baseband technology enabled devices (see par. [0002]). Atkinson et al. does not disclose anything about appliances being controllable by a corresponding appliance control module.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is believed that all pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
COHEN, PONTANI, LIEBERMAN & PAVANE

By



Edward M. Weisz
Reg. No. 37,257
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

Date: October 31, 2003